



Kassam “Freddy” Deeb takes home the gold bracelet and one million dollars from the 4th Annual UltimateBet.com Aruba Poker Classic.

The UltimateBet.com Poker Classic again folds its tents, but not before providing an exciting week of live poker action for the more than 600 players that traveled to Aruba’s shores and some of the biggest poker superstars in the game.

Freddy Deeb, a thirty year veteran of the game, making a living at it since nearly completing his degree in Mechanical Engineering, has reached the pinnacle of his career with this momentous victory. Originally from Lebanon, he has made the U.S. his home since war broke out in his country years ago while he was studying in the states. This is his second major first place win, having taken a bracelet at the LA Poker Classic in 2003. After literally “sweating it out” during the final game on Saturday at the Azzuro Restaurant in the Playa Linda Resort, along with the five others at the final table, he took the trophy away from second place winner Josh Schlein. Josh, a college student will go home with \$450,000 dollars and the record, at twenty-years-old, of being the youngest player to ever win such a prize in a major tournament.

Stacy Matuson has the distinction of being the first woman to make it to the final table in this prestigious event, and after Robbie Border was busted out, the remaining four, Freddy, Josh, Devin Porter and Johan Storaker played a conservative game for several hours until Devin and Johan busted out.

At this point Josh began betting very aggressively, and though Freddy had the longer stack, he was content to just match Josh’s bets, bringing the second to last pot up to 6.28 million, which Freddy raked in when Josh got “rivered” by Freddy’s pair of 4’s to beat Josh’s bold move to try and win with a pair of 3’s.

The last hand had Freddy and Josh very close, with Freddy holding a Jack-3 and Josh holding a Jack- 2 when the turn brought an Ace and the game was officially over, even though Freddy made a flush on the river, he already had Josh beat.

The exciting play by play action was reported on line not only by John Vorhaus, host of the official Ultimatebet.com Aruba blog, but also by Poker Press Box, Poker Pages and Card Player Magazine with their online presence Cardplayer.com. Lisa Wheeler, Amy Calistri and BJ Nemeth, respectively, tapped away at their keyboards throughout the final game to thousands of poker fans eagerly awaiting to hear the up-to-the moment bulletins. The UltimateBet.com Aruba Poker Classic will be broadcast in March as part of the World Poker Tournament series on the Travel Channel.

During the awards ceremony at a farewell dinner at the Radisson Resort and Casino, host hotel to the tournament, Jack McClelland, Tournament Director, gave Freddy his trophy and bracelet, and a certificate that gives him entry to the WTP Finals, worth \$25,000.

This year’s tournament again hosted some of the great names of Texas Hold ‘em Poker, Phil Hellsmuth, Jr, Annie Duke, Antonio “Magician” Esfandiari, and Phil Laak, with his lady love and celebrity poker player, screen star and Oscar nominee Jennifer Tilly. Miss Tilly graciously consented to be interviewed by “The News” and the second half of her interview, including insights into being a woman in the highly competitive man’s world of poker will appear in tomorrow’s paper.

Freddy Deeb “Came to Aruba to win” and he did it!

Million Dollar Winner Freddy Deeb accepts a congratulatory handshake from Josh Schlein at the end of the final game of the 4th Annual UltimateBet.com Aruba Poker Classic. This prestigious tournament is hosted by the Radisson Resort and Casino and broadcast internationally as part of the World Poker Tour on the Travel Channel. Josh, setting the record as the youngest winner in the history of the tournament put up a brave battle, but was no match for seasoned veteran Kassam “Freddy” Deeb. As the sun set on the terraced Azurro Restaurant in the Playa Linda Resort fans cheered the final hand that decided the game. (NEWS photo)